

LUNACY AND MENTAL TREATMENT
ACTS

Annual Report of the
Board of Control
to the
Lord Chancellor

For the Year 1958

Presented pursuant to Act of Parliament

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THE FORTY-FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF CONTROL FOR THE YEAR 1958

To the Right Honourable The LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR

My Lord,

In pursuance of Section 162 of the Lunacy Act, 1890, we beg to submit the following Report:—

Introduction

This report refers briefly to the condition of mental hospitals and other institutional accommodation for the mentally ill (but not the mentally defective) in England and Wales, and to the care of such patients. Since the coming into force of the National Health Service Act, 1946, the Minister of Health has become responsible for providing and maintaining mental hospitals and hospitals for the mentally defective. The Annual Report of the Minister to Parliament now includes sections on mental health with statistics relating both to mental illness and to mental deficiency.

General

The year under review has seen the continuance of the encouraging trends which have been apparent for some considerable time. The most important one, perhaps, is the diminishing extent to which it is necessary to use the compulsory powers available under the Lunacy and Mental Treatment Acts. This is shown partly by the steady increase in the number and proportion of voluntary admissions (now accounting for 85 per cent. of all admissions—the highest figure yet recorded) and partly by the continuing removal of beds from the ambit of the Acts in order that patients may be admitted to them without formalities of any kind. Also significant is the fact that, though the number of admissions continues to increase, the number of patients in hospital at any one time is now steadily declining, which suggests that more effective methods of treatment are enabling hospital accommodation to be used more efficiently and are reducing the average length of stay in hospital.

It is satisfactory that these trends should continue, not only because they are desirable in themselves, but also because they should help to ensure the practical success of the major legislative changes proposed in the Mental Health Bill which was introduced into Parliament during 1958.

Accommodation

At 31st December, 1958, there were 140,525 patients under care under the provisions of the Lunacy and Mental Treatment Acts, 1890 to 1930. In addition there were 50 patients in Military Hospitals, 192 Broadmoor patients in mental hospitals and 913 in Broadmoor Institution. The total number of patients notified as under treatment for mental illness was thus 141,680, a reduction of 5,282 compared with 31st December, 1957.

The designated mental hospitals, excluding the former public assistance institutions, had, at 31st December, 1958, accommodation for 121,030 beds calculated on the space-standards prescribed by the Ministry of Health. This figure is 2,917 less than that for 31st December, 1957, the reduction being largely due to the acceleration of the process of de-designation of beds for the treatment of patients outside the provisions of the Acts. Of the 121,030 bed-spaces provided by these hospitals, 2,847 were not available for use by patients: 549 were closed owing to shortage of staff, 745 were being used for

other services and 1,553 were in wards awaiting renovation and repairs. Although there were 3,229 fewer beds in use than at the end of 1957, overcrowding, which amounted to 12,932 beds, decreased by 1,470 beds.

Admissions

There were 91,558 admissions to designated mental hospitals in 1958 compared with 88,943 in 1957 and 55,856 in 1950. Admissions to all institutions and to private single care numbered 95,968 in 1958, an increase of 2,662 over the previous year.

Voluntary admissions continued to increase and admissions under certificate to decrease. In 1957, 82·6 per cent. (73,499) of the admissions to designated mental hospitals were voluntary and 15·9 per cent. (14,126) were under certificate. During 1958 voluntary admissions increased to 85·0 per cent. (77,850) and admissions under certificate fell to 13·5 per cent. (12,355). The number of voluntary admissions to all types of care increased by 4,424 to a total of 81,713 while that of admissions under certificate fell by 1,788 to 12,868.

Of the total admissions in 1958, 42,954 were re-admissions. This represented 44·8 per cent. of the total compared with 44·9 per cent. (41,908) in 1957.

Movement and Distribution of Patients

Details of the movement of patients during the year and their distribution at the end of the year are given in the Appendix.

Nurses

The information available about nurses relates only to those hospitals classified as mental hospitals on the criteria set out in the note to the table below. These hospitals contribute approximately 95 per cent. of all beds for mentally ill patients in National Health Service hospitals.

Nursing Staff in Mental Illness Hospitals

Grade	1957 30th September		1958 30th September	
	Whole-time	Part-time	Whole-time	Part-time
Total:				
All grades	20,903	7,176	22,093	7,300
Male	10,913	225	11,470	260
Female	9,990	6,951	10,623	7,040
Trained Nurses:				
Total	10,938	1,643	10,893	1,593
Male	7,200	158	7,117	198
Female	3,738	1,485	3,776	1,395
Student Nurses:				
Total	4,566	—	5,267	—
Male	2,001	—	2,459	—
Female	2,565	—	2,808	—
Others:				
Total	5,399	5,533	5,933	5,707
Male	1,712	67	1,894	62
Female	3,687	5,466	4,039	5,645

Note: These figures relate to hospitals:—

- (a) having at least 90 per cent. of their beds allocated for mental patients; and
- (b) having at least 90 per cent. of their beds allocated for mental and mental deficiency patients, the majority being for mental patients.

Registered Hospitals, Licensed Houses and Nursing Homes

The four hospitals⁽¹⁾ registered for the reception of persons suffering from mental illness provided at the end of the year a total of just over 1,200 beds. They were visited and found to be in their usual good condition.

Following the decision by the Minister of Health, on the recommendation of the Board, not to renew the licence of Halliford House, Upper Halliford, Shepperton, Middlesex, after 22nd March, 1958, and the closure of Ashwood House Licensed House, Kingswinford, Dudley, Worcestershire, on 20th December, 1958, twenty licensed houses⁽²⁾ remained in operation at the end of the year. Of these eight were licensed by the Minister of Health and twelve by provincial justices. They were licensed for the accommodation of a maximum of 971 patients. Visits to them were made as required by statute and in general conditions in them were satisfactory.

With the closure of East House Approved Nursing Home, Moss Lane, Pinner, Middlesex, on 9th September, 1958, there were eleven nursing homes approved by the Minister of Health for the reception of voluntary or temporary patients under the Mental Treatment Act, 1930.

Single Patients

At 31st December, 1958, there were 40 patients in private single care⁽³⁾, a reduction of seven during the year. Thirty-eight were visited and conditions found to be satisfactory. Visits are pending in the remaining cases.

Broadmoor Institution

On 4th August, 1958, Dr. J. B. Bishop, the Deputy Medical Superintendent, died after ten years service to the hospital.

A start was made on a carefully prepared programme aimed at upgrading the chronic psychotic population of the hospital, mainly by using recently developed forms of drug therapy. The results achieved were encouraging, though it is still too early to assess long-term results and prospects.

A considerable amount of publicity was given to the escape of a male patient on 8th July, 1958. This was the first serious incident of the kind since 1952. The Board held a special Inquiry as a result of which certain additional security precautions were recommended and put into effect.

The Institution was regularly visited during the year.

Royal Naval Hospital, Great Yarmouth

On 1st April, 1958, the Royal Naval Hospital, Great Yarmouth, was transferred from the Admiralty to the Minister of Health under the provisions of the Yarmouth Naval Hospital Transfer Act, 1957, and was designated as a mental hospital with the name of St. Nicholas. As from 1st May, 1958, it became part of St. Andrew's Mental Hospital, Thorpe, Norwich.

(¹) Cheadle Royal, near Manchester; St. Andrew's, Northampton; The Retreat, York; and Barnwood House, Gloucester. These hospitals are not vested in the Minister of Health, but are managed on a voluntary basis.

(²) These are privately owned houses or homes in which patients are received for payment.

(³) A patient in single care resides with and under the legal control of a private individual (Cmd. 8594, published June, 1952).

St. Andrew's and St. Nicholas Hospitals were visited by the Board's Commissioners on 1st October, 1958, and it was reported that the necessary changes had been made smoothly and satisfactorily.

P. Wing, Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley

The usual visit was paid to this Service Hospital and a satisfactory report was received.

The Board of Control

Mr. D. F. Brown, Secretary of the Board since 1st January, 1956, retired on 25th May, 1958, and was succeeded by Mr. P. Benner.

It is with regret that we have to report the death on 24th October, 1958, of a Commissioner, Surgeon-Captain J. F. M. Campbell, R.N. (Retired).

By Order of the Board,

I. F. ARMER,
Chairman.

P. BENNER,
Secretary.

Ministry of Health Building,
Savile Row,
London, W.1.

June, 1959.

APPENDIX

DISTRIBUTION OF PATIENTS

The distribution of all patients at the end of the year 1958 may be seen by reference to Tables I and II and the changes by class and status of patients in Table III. 98·4 per cent. of them have been resident in hospitals vested in the Minister of Health.

MOVEMENT OF PATIENTS

Admissions, Discharges, Transfers to other Care and Deaths in 1958. The following statement includes patients of each status (Voluntary, Temporary and Certified):—

	Total
Resident at 1st January, 1958	146,961
Direct admissions:	
Total	95,968
Not previously admitted	53,014
Other	42,954
Indirect admissions (excluding statutory regradings) ⁽¹⁾ ...	578
Regradings from non-statutory to statutory	254
	243,761
Discharged and Departed:	
Total	83,979
Recovered ⁽²⁾	17,722
Relieved	56,820
Not Improved	9,087
By operation of law ⁽³⁾	350
Transferred (Under Order) to other care ⁽¹⁾	931
Regradings from statutory to non-statutory	3,984
Died	13,187
Remained at 31st December, 1958	141,680
	243,761

⁽¹⁾ The figure of "Indirect admissions (excluding statutory regradings)" is less than "Transferred (Under Order) to other care" because a few transfers into designated mental hospitals from other types of care are recorded by those hospitals as direct admissions.

⁽²⁾ Including any patient discharged shortly after admission as "Not now insane".

⁽³⁾ By reason of irregular admission documents, the lapsing of reception orders (Section 38, Lunacy Act, 1890, and Section 7, Lunacy Act, 1891) or discharge after absconding (Section 85, Lunacy Act, 1890).

TABLE I
PATIENTS UNDER CARE AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1958 AND 31ST DECEMBER, 1957
ANALYSIS BY TYPE OF CARE AND CLASS OF PATIENT

		31st December, 1958				31st Dec., 1957
		Private	Health Service	Broad-moor Patients	Total	Total
Total	...	3,152	137,423	1,105	141,680	146,962
	Total*	911	58,803	905	60,619	62,507
	Males	2,241	78,620	200	81,061	84,455
	Females					
In hospitals vested in the Minister of Health:—						
(i) Mental hospitals	...	1,074	136,858	192	138,124	143,220
	Total†	326	58,577	176	59,079	60,815
	Males	748	78,281	16	79,045	82,405
	Females					
(ii) Teaching hospitals	...	—	392	—	392	376
	Total	—	163	—	163	154
	Males	—	229	—	229	222
	Females					
(iii) Broadmoor Institution	...	—	—	913	913	914
	Total	—	—	729	729	723
	Males	—	—	184	184	191
	Females					
In premises not vested in the Minister of Health but deemed to be mental hospitals		—	31	—	31	34
	Total	—	13	—	13	16
	Males	—	18	—	18	18
	Females					
In Registered hospitals	...	1,100	112	—	1,212	1,221
	Total	378	50	—	428	437
	Males	722	62	—	784	784
	Females					
In Licensed houses:—						
Metropolitan	...	206	—	—	206	210
	Total	50	—	—	50	53
	Males	156	—	—	156	157
	Females					
Provincial	...	550	30	—	580	602
	Total	93	—	—	93	98
	Males	457	30	—	487	504
	Females					
In nursing homes approved under the Mental Treatment Act		132	—	—	132	139
	Total	6	—	—	6	3
	Males	126	—	—	126	136
	Females					
In Military Hospitals	...	50	—	—	50	199
	Total	50	—	—	50	199
	Males	—	—	—	—	—
	Females					
In private single-care		40	—	—	40	47
	Total	8	—	—	8	9
	Males	32	—	—	32	38
	Females					

* The daily average numbers resident during the calendar year 1958 were 59,768 males and 79,785 females.

† The numbers in former Public Assistance Institutions included in the totals were 7,017 at 31st December, 1958 and 7,282 at 31st December, 1957.

TABLE II
ANALYSIS BY TYPE OF CARE AND STATUS OF PATIENT

				31st December, 1958				31st Dec., 1957
				Volun- tary	Tem- porary	Certi- fied	Total	Total
Total	...	...	...	Total				
				Males				
				Females				
In hospitals vested in the Minister of Health:—								
(i) Mental hospitals	...			Total				
				Males				
				Females				
(ii) Teaching hospitals	...			Total				
				Males				
				Females				
(iii) Broadmoor Institution				Total				
				Males				
				Females				
In premises not vested in the Minister of Health but deemed to be mental hospitals				Total				
				Males				
				Females				
In Registered hospitals	...	...		Total				
				Males				
				Females				
In Licensed houses:—								
Metropolitan	...	...		Total				
				Males				
				Females				
Provincial	...	...	...	Total				
				Males				
				Females				
In nursing homes approved under the Mental Treatment Act				Total				
				Males				
				Females				
In Military Hospitals	...	...		Total				
				Males				
				Females				
In private single-care	...	...		Total				
				Males				
				Females				
Of total:—								
Private patients	...	...		Total				
				Males				
				Females				
Health Service patients	...			Total				
				Males				
				Females				
Broadmoor patients	...			Total				
				Males				
				Females				

TABLE III
ANALYSIS OF CHANGES BY CLASS AND STATUS OF PATIENT

	Increase (or decrease —) during 1958			Average annual increase (or decrease —) in five years 1954–58 inclusive		
	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
Total	— 5,282	— 1,888	— 3,394	— 1,939	— 778	— 1,161
Class:—						
Private... ..	— 553	— 331	— 222	— 372	— 143	— 229
Health Service ...	— 4,720	— 1,560	— 3,160	— 1,581	— 652	— 929
Broadmoor patients ...	— 9	+ 3	— 12	+ 14	+ 17	— 3
Status:—						
Voluntary	+ 8,151	+ 3,697	+ 4,454	+ 5,688	+ 2,388	+ 3,300
Temporary	+ 18	— 9	+ 27	— 2	+ 2	— 4
Certified	— 13,451	— 5,576	— 7,875	— 7,625	— 3,168	— 4,457

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